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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH  
WASHINGTON

July 22, 1980

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Walter Elder  
Secretary  
National Foreign Intelligence Board

SUBJECT: Dissenting Positions in National Intelligence  
Estimates and Memorandums (U)

The Department of State is fully prepared to cooperate in working out procedures to make the dissent process more orderly. To this end, the following changes in the text of your July 10 memorandum are offered:

- Rewrite the last sentence of paragraph 4, p. 2 to read: "The guidelines below are not intended to circumscribe in any way the right of NFIB members to dissent in NIEs but to assist the DCI in clearly communicating to policy makers the findings of the Intelligence Community on important foreign developments." (The draft implies some limitations on the right of dissent.)
- In paragraph 7.a replace "should establish procedures to assure" in the second sentence with "share the responsibility for assuring."

Thus, the full text of paragraph 7.a would read as follows:

7. Content

a. The objective of these guidelines on procedures is to improve the content of dissenting positions. The NIOs and agencies participating in the production of national intelligence share the responsibility for assuring that dissenting positions (1) address issues within the scope of the estimate, (2) parallel the main text in substance and degree of detail, and (3) convey clear supporting rationale for the dissenting view.

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State Dept. review completed

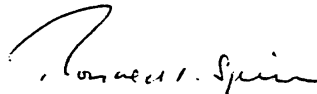
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--Replace the text of paragraph 7.b with the following:

7.b. In order to achieve an orderly and timely production process the NIO, acting for the DCI, is authorized to set a deadline prior to the NFIB meeting for Agency submission of texts of dissents approved by the principals, together with the appropriate background.

Additionally, I would recommend modifications of paragraph 5.b on page two to make provisions for the kind of footnote which references a dissent spelled out in an earlier NIE or Memorandum.



Ronald I. Spiers

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